



# Hear the Word

from Pastor James N. McEachran



Gather... Encourage... Equip... Send...

## Palm Sunday

March 25, 2018

### Shattering the Silence

John 12:12-19

Bethany, two miles from Jerusalem, had been a place of hospitality for Jesus many times. {AirBnB} And it was not unlike him to be fond of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha who made their home, His home.

Recall the story? Grim news came once that Lazarus, "he whom Jesus loved" was ill. After two days, Jesus decided to go to them, but his disciples asked him not to go as "the Jews were seeking to stop him," but they went. And when they got there, they learned that Lazarus had died.

Remember? Jesus raised him from the dead with the words "Lazarus come out!" And he did and many of those who had been in support of his sisters believed in Jesus.

Plot renewed as some went to witness to the miracle; Pharisees and high priests called a meeting perplexed, fearful as Passover approached and Jesus hid out.

Six days before Passover, Jesus arrived in Bethany again; at an evening meal Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus' feet as if for burial. At the same time, great crowds assembled to see Jesus and (no surprise!) to see Lazarus.

On the day before Passover began, word spread and crowds assembled again. There was a great shattering of the silence as the obedient Son of God is finds a welcoming crowd.

Note the conflicted setting: Jesus and His disciples, those who witnessed or were hearing about the raising of Lazarus, many of whom became believers, and the religious power bloc. And who knows how many who were just up to the city for Passover. (Can you image the scene, the press, the noise?)

"Palm Sunday," we keep it and our song is the song of that day too---

*"Hosanna, save us now!  
Blessed is the one  
who comes in the name of the Lord---  
The King of Israel!"*

Each of the four Gospels record the event, but it is unique to John's narrative that those who were with him when He "called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to TESTIFY, TO WITNESS" and "because they heard he had performed this sign that the crowds went out to meet him."

It is unique to John that the pivot point into Holy Week today is that the witness was, is, and will always be that Jesus' life, death, resurrection is MEANT FOR ALL! And our lives, our witness, means to be about shattering the silence, the darkness of sin, evil, death and the power of all that comes our way when there is fear, anxiety, doubts, and any other power that would domesticate, replace, or deny this Word made flesh, this God for us, the One who calls to courage, in witness and living to the love that will never let us go!

It is Palm Sunday, our little palm parade is rehearsal, it seems to a week from now, when we confess that our true God, our true relationship with God is possible, is mediated towards reconciliation.

Our witness shatters the silence with the good news, the heavenly song, that the One who entered the Holy City accepted death "but God raised him high." Name above all names so that all of creation, all beings, "should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Our new week will be lived in times often filled with the thirst and hunger for newness, to the redemption of all that pressed against or threatens to destroy the wave of those who seek to live lives deeply committed to justice and peace for all.

It begins for us anew right now. Call it what you will, a holiday, a revolution, a resolution, a movement; or, just one act in the words and in action to walk out of this place together, to walk out and to talk it out that our mission, in the Crucified and Risen One, mans to turn this churning world right side up with the love and the peace, the joy and the hope that ONLY Christ can bring. And the voices of the young are our overture, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. It is time for LIFE!

In our Gospel, the disciples did not seem to get the meaning of the events from the raising of Lazarus to the raising, the glorification of Jesus.

But, they remembered, as we remember, in the Word, at the Breaking of the Bread, in the unity we share in mission in the world this day.

Holy Week is before us...new commandment day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Vigil. Then, on Easter Sunday, as we launch back into the world that God loves so much, may we join those who will leave all the powers and events that assail the One we serve, be left SPEECHLESS AND POWERLESS, DEFEATED, as we believe, teach and confess that our lives in witness, in words and in actions, confront the fear and darkness of the world.

Then, may it be said by them, "You see, we can do nothing." As we confess anew that Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again" that the whole world might live and walk in His ways

Even so, comes Lord Jesus comes in us through us, to the ends of the earth. Amen!